

Hello Haddonfield artists!

First off, let us thank you for participating in the show on Saturday, and also thank those of you who were able to return on Sunday. We really appreciate your being flexible as the weather changed by the hour and sticking with the show as best you could for your safety and that of your product.

We feel terrible about those who lost tents and product during that downpour on Saturday. While somewhat expected, the rain and wind (1) was much worse than predicted. And we certainly understand your decision/s not to return on Sunday. As our Guidelines note, “we would never force an artist to set up or participate during dangerous weather and risk ruining their work”.

We do hope that you did well enough on Saturday (and a bit on Sunday) to make the show worth your while. That early crowd on Saturday certainly was awesome, and we were pleasantly surprised at how many people did come out on Sunday!

We especially appreciate your kindness towards Festival staff and Borough personnel. This was a very difficult week for Haddonfield – they had a “microburst” on Tuesday evening with power failures, tree damage to houses, vehicles and roadways, and minor flooding in various parts of the Borough including at the intersection of Tanner and Kings Highway!

Honestly, on Wednesday morning of last week, we were not sure if the event would still be able to occur; but the Borough did an incredible job clearing trees and branches, working to get power restored, cleaning drains and “ponding” areas, etc.

And - they responded quickly when trees fell on two vehicles in a parking lot behind the dinosaur statue and the transformer fire on Tanner Street during the show! As if they needed more issues this week!

And: a note about our communication methods – we did need to use our Facebook site (@rencrafts) to communicate with you all- thus we encouraged you on Friday to follow us for updates. Text messaging services and software (which we would need for over 250 cell phone #s) are expensive- and it’s a service we’d rather not have to pass along in booth fees, etc. On that note, Maria met someone this weekend who told s about a possible free service and we’re contacting other show directors about this.

Again, we thank you so much for sticking it out and hope to see you all next year! (Save the weekend – we’re hoping to be approved for July 13-14, 2024, yes we know it’s State College weekend, but need to shift due to late July 4th).

With gratitude,

Maria & Marcy

For those of you who would like a more detailed explanation of what the decision-making process for the revised Sunday hours and continuation of Saturday hours entailed – feel free to read below; keeping in mind the difficult week that the Borough had and know that they, and we, were trying to side on the extreme side of caution.

1. We, RenCrafts, are hired by the Borough (technically, the Partnership for Haddonfield which is the management corporation for the downtown Business District (much like Manayunk Development Corp. is for Manayunk)
2. Thus, we both confer with and defer to certain Borough personnel, including the Mayor, the Commissioners, the Borough Administrator (who was onsite Saturday), Public Works, and Borough Police to make certain key decisions about the show – as an example, changing the dates of the show for next year: we need to discuss and have approvals from all parties.
3. On Saturday, -- after the downpour, flooding, trees down, transformer fire – a meeting was held that included Police reps, Borough Administrator, PfH Executive Director (Michael, who was in contact with the Mayor), myself and Marcy and – via telephone – the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

4. OEM advised us that it seemed likely that storms would be in Haddonfield on Sunday as early as 2 or 3 PM.
5. The Borough Administrator suggested we still hold the event on Sunday (since one option that came up was to totally cancel Sunday) – from 9 AM to 1 PM. She is the person who approves our Event Permit each year and is quite familiar with the show. We all agreed that the time could work for all of us.
6. Considerations that needed to be made included police staffing with adjusted times and/or overtime hours; trash pick up staffing and street cleaning staffing; and communicating with the media in time to get the word out and with all of you.
7. (Had we cancelled the event – other affected parties would have been the porta-john company, overnight security, barricade removal, and communicating with businesses who had already pre-determined “Festival staffing” numbers.)
8. While some downtown businesses and some artists would have liked the Festival to continue after 1 PM or keep the same original hours (10 to 5), we all felt that the Safety and Security of ALL people in Haddonfield on Sunday was our prime concern. We even discussed how to handle it if there were a tornado watch or warning issued, which was a possibility.
9. We set 1 PM as the end time as we knew we would need time for a decent tear down and we all agreed that the best situation would be that it ALL occurred (tear down, loading cars, street cleaning) while it was still dry and not actively raining in town.
10. Of course, a lot of tear down also takes into consideration how many visitors and shoppers are still on the closed streets. And it was dry and there were still shoppers at 1 PM.
11. Thus, Marcy and I and Scott made many attempts to communicate to you all that 1 PM was a “soft” tear down – that the police just needed to See You Actively Loading Some Product up (their words)– and that sales could still continue... for A While. A reasonable time frame so that there was enough time to bring cars onto the road – which, as we noted, the police would have liked to have done at 2 PM but then agreed to 2:30 PM.
12. However, some artists were still selling and not tearing down as late as 2:30 PM, so we worked with the police to get some cars in as safely as possible. The crowds were pretty much gone by then. But trust me when I tell you that the police were not happy about this (how some artists ignored our instructions to Tear Down and Load Up) and we, RenCrafts, do truly appreciate those of you who were listening to us and following our on-site guidance.
13. Yes, the procedure kept changing – curb or no curb load out: It really depended on what we saw for ourselves on Sunday AM – and, with police, determined that enough empty spaces remained for vehicles to be able to pull right up to booth spaces to load vehicles. We’re sorry if this was confusing, but an Event has Many Moving Parts and, like the weather, decisions can change by the minute / hour.
14. We hope all of you got home safe and sound as we did – however, we arrived home to... storms in our neighborhood of trees! Some trees down and minor flooding (we live by the Wissahickon Creek and also the Schuylkill River overflowing affects us). Thankfully, we still had power and A/C!